

## 6. Connectivity

### 6.1 Access to communication devices, the internet & mobile signal

Connectivity via phone, email, messaging services, group messaging and calling, social media etc is part of our lives now. To stay connected and informed though more and more we become reliant on a good mobile signal and broadband. But it's easy to forget that this can leave some people disconnected from the local community and out of touch with everything that's going on. To help ensure everyone feels connected we need to know how to keep everyone linked and informed.

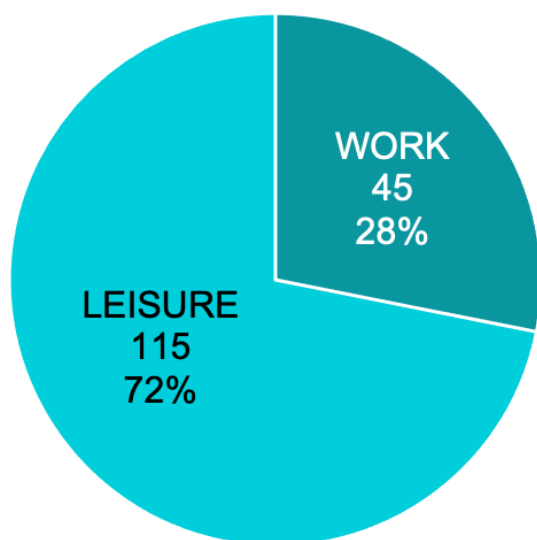
To this end we needed to find out how everyone stays connected these days.

Of 188 respondents 172 (91%) still have access to a landline telephone. We might have expected to see those that don't coming from younger age groups, but in actual fact the ages were evenly spread across all age group except 80+. All had a mobile phone. Of those that stated employment status 4 were retired and remainder employed or self-employed. Income brackets were spread from £20,000 to £30,000 to £50,000+

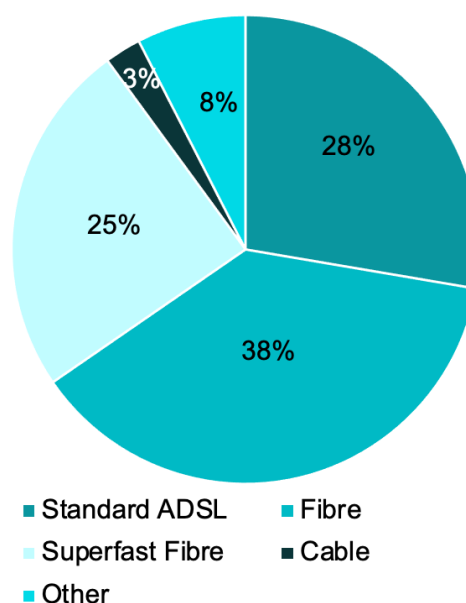
Only 6 (3%) respondents don't have a mobile phone and all of these were over 46, but all had a landline. Of those that stated employment status all households contained someone retired. 1 stated that they were not working due to illness or disability. Only 2 advised of their income brackets. 2 also do not have broadband at home

8 (4%) respondents don't have broadband at home. All were over 46. 4 households only contained people aged 66+ and 3 households all members were 80+. Of those that stated employment status all were retired. Of those that stated household income 2 had incomes of under £10,000 per annum. Whilst these figures may seem small, as a percentage of the total population and number of households they potentially affect over 100 residents and 50 households - which in a small community is significant.

Broadband used for:



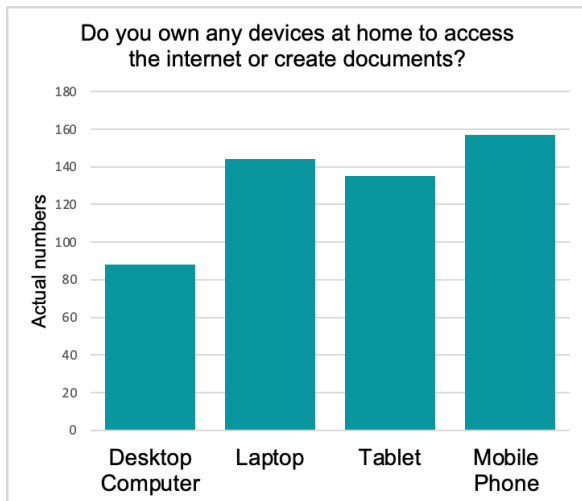
What type & speed of broadband do you have?



Of the 159 responding to which type of broadband they have, 66% of respondents have Fibre, Superfast fibre or cable. A significant percentage - 28% still have standard ADSL. Those who stated other relied either on mobile networks or didn't know which they have.

A significant proportion - 15% said it was not adequate for their needs. Half of those have standard ADSL and half have fibre. Those with standard ADSL stated, in the main, that they would like Fibre, but either it isn't available or too costly. And likewise those with fibre

would like to upgrade to Superfast Fibre. Common complaints were buffering and being unable to have more than one user at a time. 7 of this group use broadband primarily for work purposes.



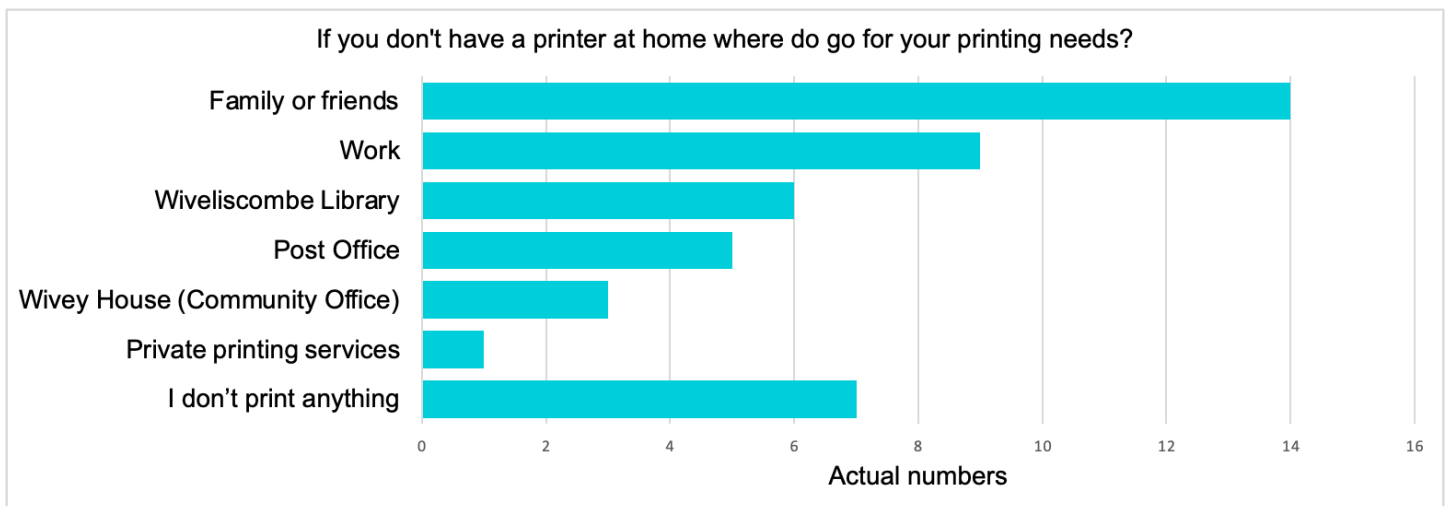
Asked 'Do you own any devices at home to access the internet or create documents?' 181 respondents listed items. Only 15 were limited to a tablet, only 2 were limited to a mobile phone. The remainder had access to either a desktop or laptop computer.

Of the 10 people who don't have access to broadband, or a home desktop computer, laptop or tablet

- 4 use Wivey House (Community Office)
- 6 use Wiveliscombe Library
- 6 use Local Cafe or pub

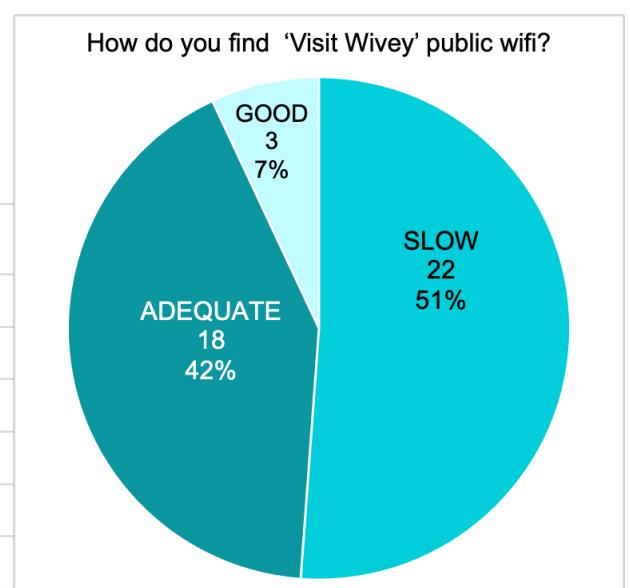
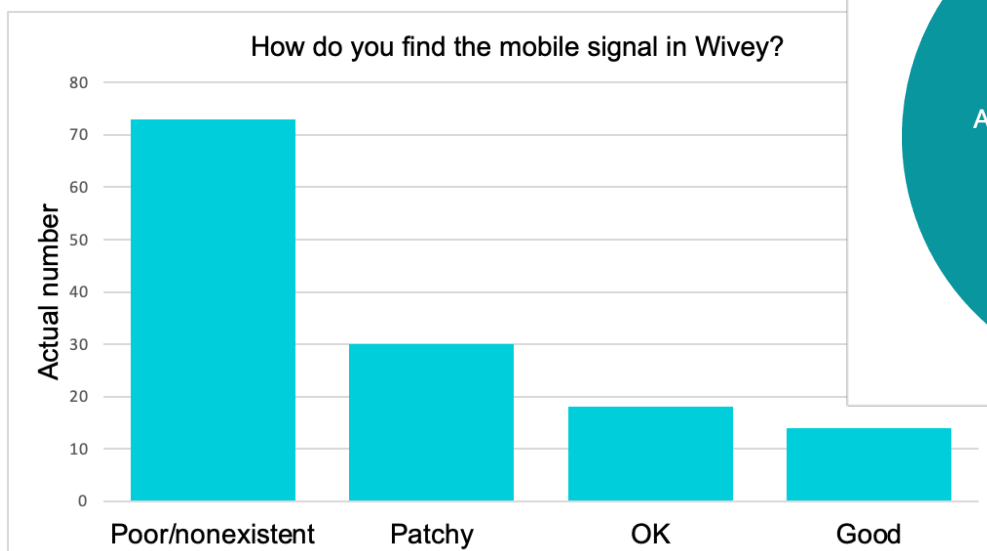
The following questions about whether it's adequate for their needs elicited 28 responses so it's unclear how to read this.

Of 186 respondents 147 (79%) have a printer at home. For those that don't they told us they use the places listed below for their printer needs.



Only 42 (27%) of respondents said they use 'Visit Wivey' public wifi. Just over half find it slow.

Of 135 respondents 103 find the mobile signal poor/nonexistent or patchy. Leaving only 32 finding it ok or good. The worst spots are everywhere to the south of town and Langley Marsh, but dead spots seem to crop up all over town.



Some suggested that different mobile networks were better than others and that a new mast a few years ago had improved the signal. Another made a suggestion:

*“Why not put a mast on the Church spire - this is becoming a common place situation in poor signal areas I believe”*

One person drew attention to issues with such a poor mobile signal:

*“Market traders are relying on mobile to process payments but unreliable”*

And one said:

*“I don't want a signal everywhere. I think face to face contact is most important”*

## **Action 6.1 Access to communication devices, the internet & mobile signal**

**6.1.1** WTC to publicise availability of free wifi in local businesses & community facilities

**6.1.2** WTC to investigate opportunities to improve Visit Wivey Wifi

**6.1.3** WTC - For new planning applications for housing development request condition requiring super fast fibre broadband as standard

**6.1.4** WTC - contact mobile providers to discuss improved mobile signal across Wivey, but in particular south of the B3227

**6.2.4** WTC to publicise any social media or general computer training on offer locally

**6.2.5** WTC to publicise any online communication training on offer locally

## **6.2 Staying Connected**

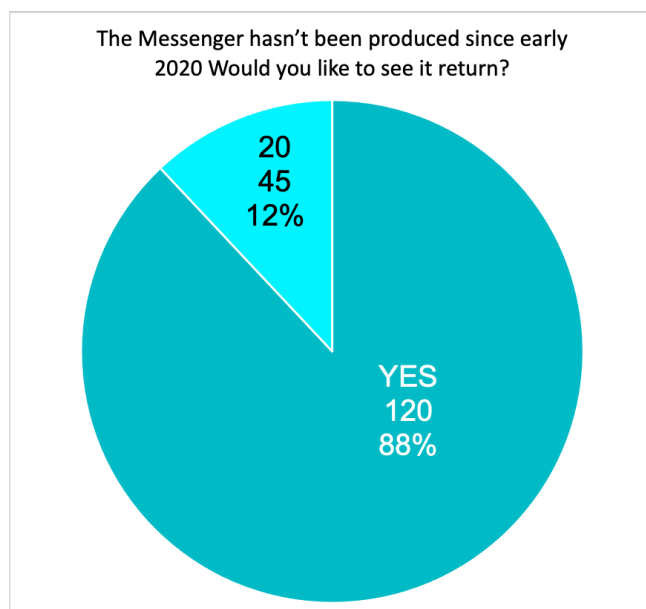
This days it can appear that everyone is online and therefore finds out all they need to know about activities and events in the online sphere via social media, websites and that everyone is happy with online booking. The Covid restrictions brought many more of us into the online world in order to stay connected. Whether it's chatting with friends and work via group messaging or meeting in the visual world via video conferencing apps. But how many people still like to see posters or printed information? How many find out via word of mouth?

We thought it would be useful to know how people accessed local information, news or events prior to the pandemic, now and pre & post lockdown restrictions. Some ways have changed dramatically in a short space of time - the question now might be 'will people go back to the old ways?'.

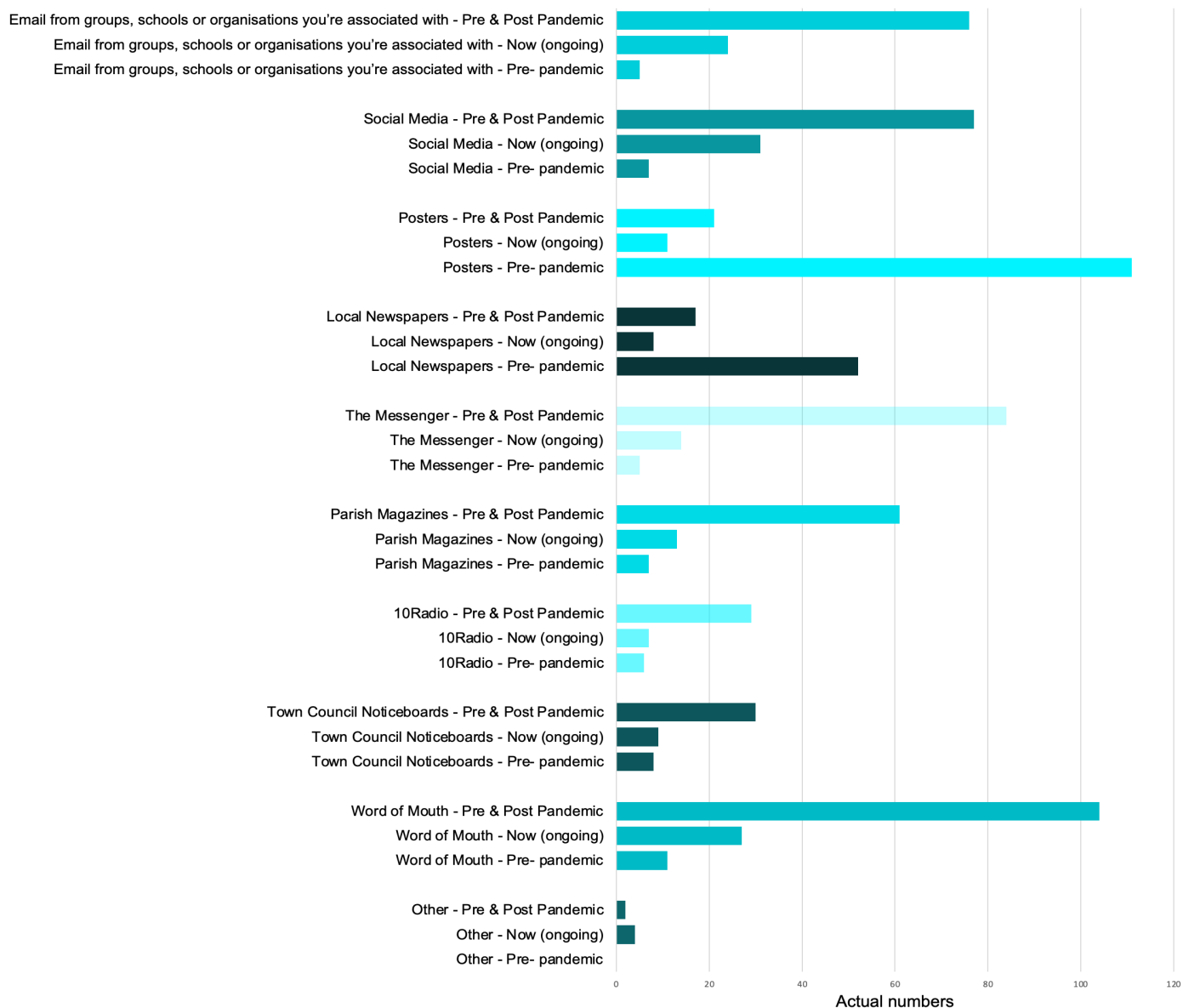
Before the pandemic 132 households still found out about activities and events from posters, but this has now dropped to just 32 households. Similarly 69 households used local newspapers for information pre-pandemic, but this have dropped to just 25 now. Word of mouth comes 2nd highest way of finding out about things and this has barely changed.

Interestingly respondents report making use of email from groups, schools or organisations they're associated with marginally more now - 81 to 100 now. Likewise social media use has gone from 84 to 108 now.

Parish magazines were both well used, but the answer to using the Messenger both pre and post pandemic is confusing as no editions have been produced since Covid restrictions were introduced in March 2020. However, when asked if people would like to see the return of the Messenger 88% (120 households) said yes.



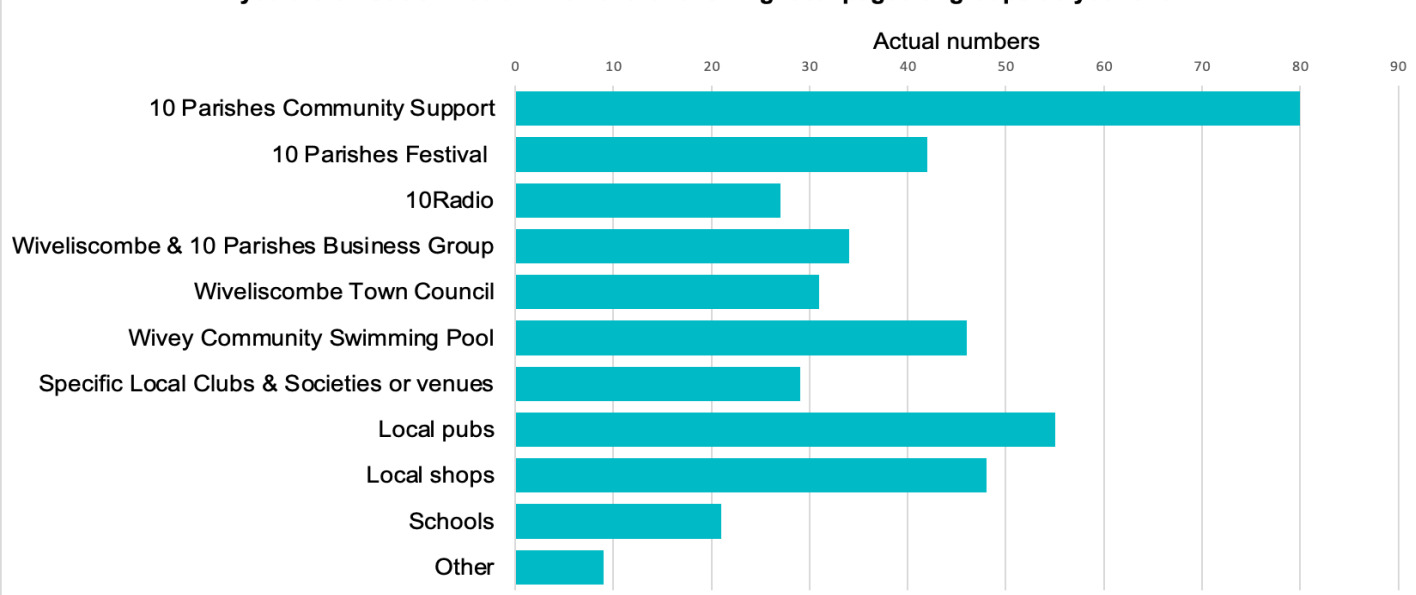
### How do you usually find out local information, news and events?



From this survey social media use doesn't appear to have changed that dramatically, but we were interested to know which platforms people use and which groups they follow - 103 households responded.

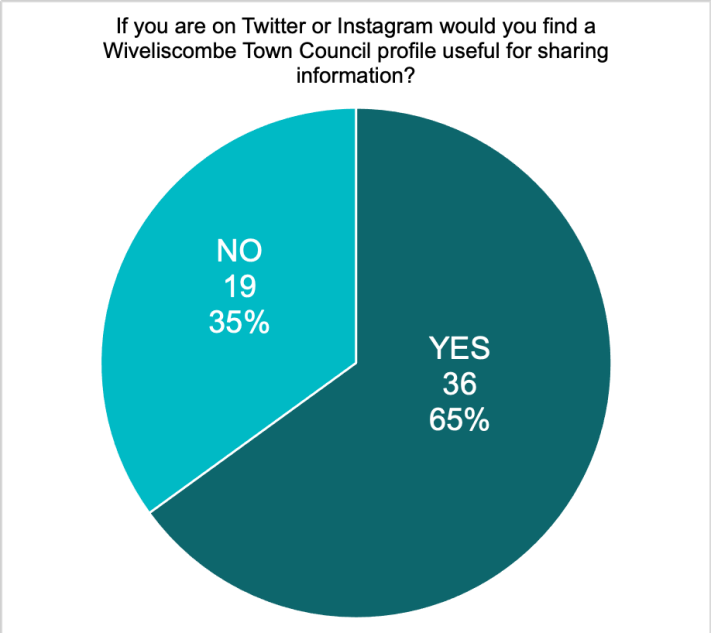
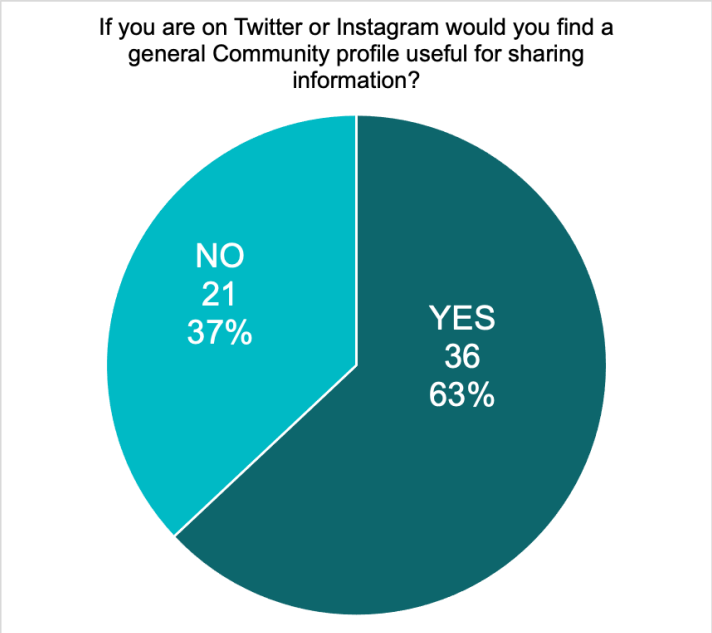
*\*Note - A list of possible social media groups was given*

### If you are on Social media which of the following local pages or groups do you follow?



10 Parishes Community Support was started by a local resident at the start of the pandemic to initially connect those with offers of support with those in need. The group has grown to over 1600 members and is well used by the community to share information about all manner of things from events to missing pets - with much in between. 80 respondents stated they follow 10 Parishes Community Support. The remainder of those listed are followed by 21 to 55 respondents with schools being the lowest and pubs the highest.

For those who use Twitter or Instagram we asked if a general community profile or a Wiveliscombe Town Council profile would be useful. Although the figures are relatively small in both cases two-thirds of respondents said they'd find them useful.



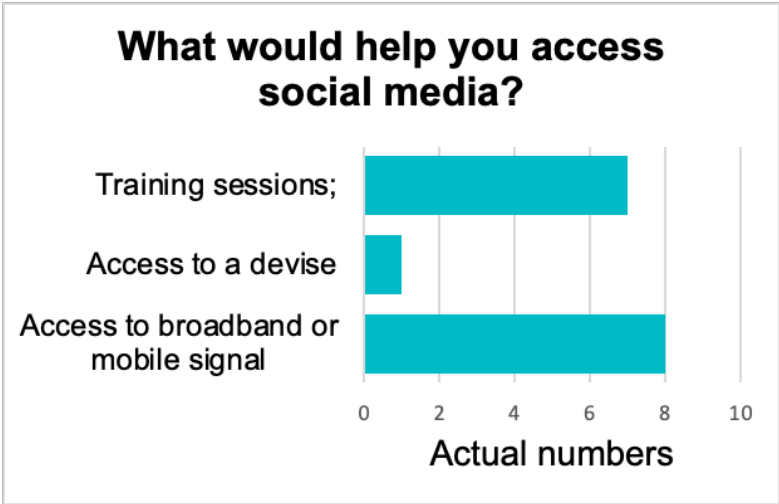
Of the 45 respondents who don't use social media, 39 (87%) would like to. From a list of possible reasons just 14 responded with majority in need of training sessions - 7 - or access to broadband or mobile signal - 8.

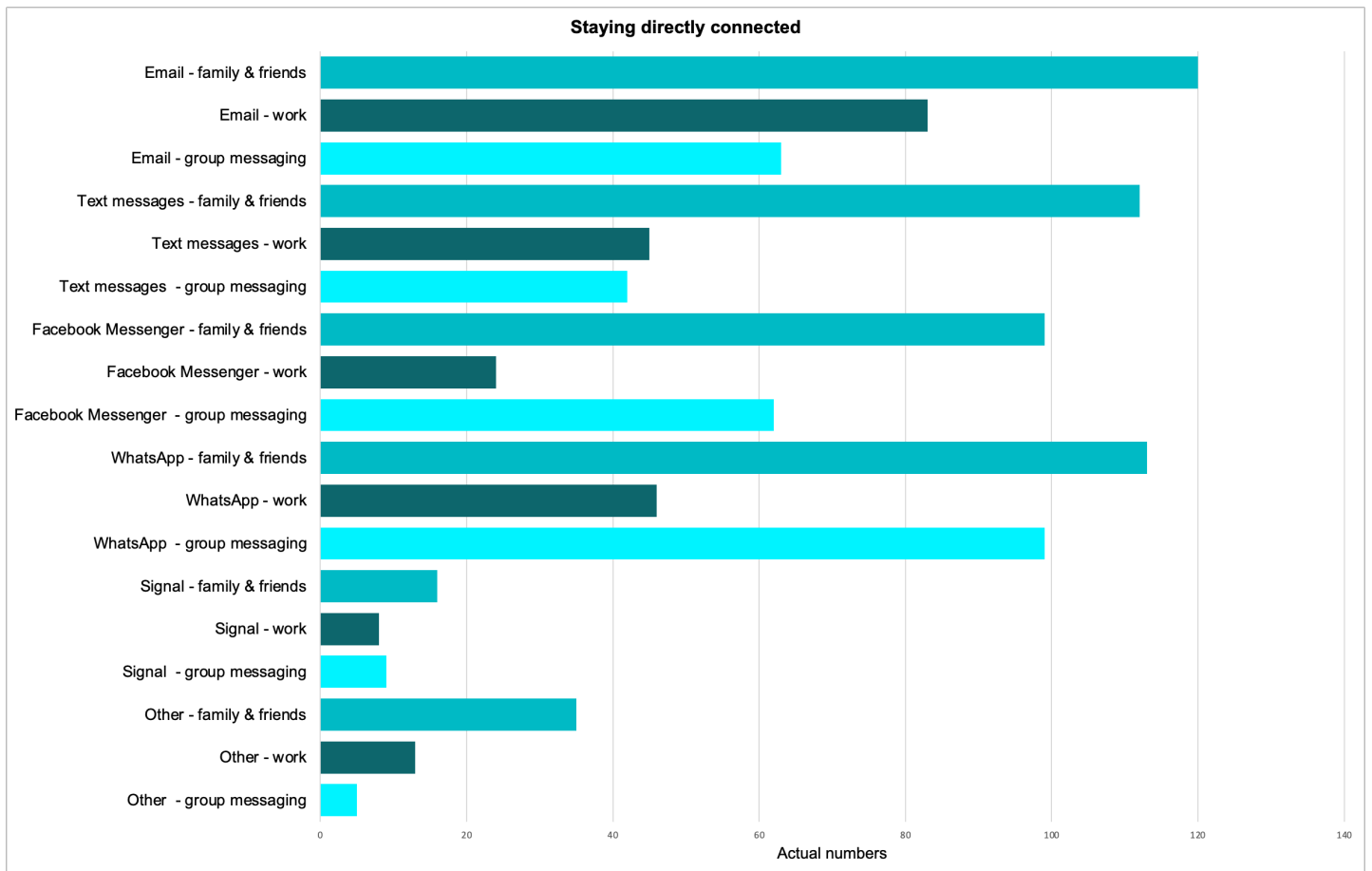
When it comes to staying directly connected to family & friends 172 people responded from the list provided, and 94 about work connections. Email is still a favoured option for both.

For family and friends it's followed very closely by WhatsApp - 113, Text - 112 and Facebook Messenger - 99. Some people commented that they hadn't heard of Signal (it's similar platform to WhatsApp). 15 people pointed out that we hadn't mentioned speaking via the telephone. And 2 reminded us that letter writing still goes on.

Text messages and WhatsApp were the next favoured forms of communication for work purposes. Respondents also mentioned telephone x 5, Microsoft Teams x 4, Internal network x 2 and in person x 1.

For group messaging WhatsApp came top of the list - 99 respondents. Followed by Email x 63, Facebook Messenger x 62 and text x 42. Others mentioned Telephone x2, Microsoft Teams x 1 and Snapchat x1.



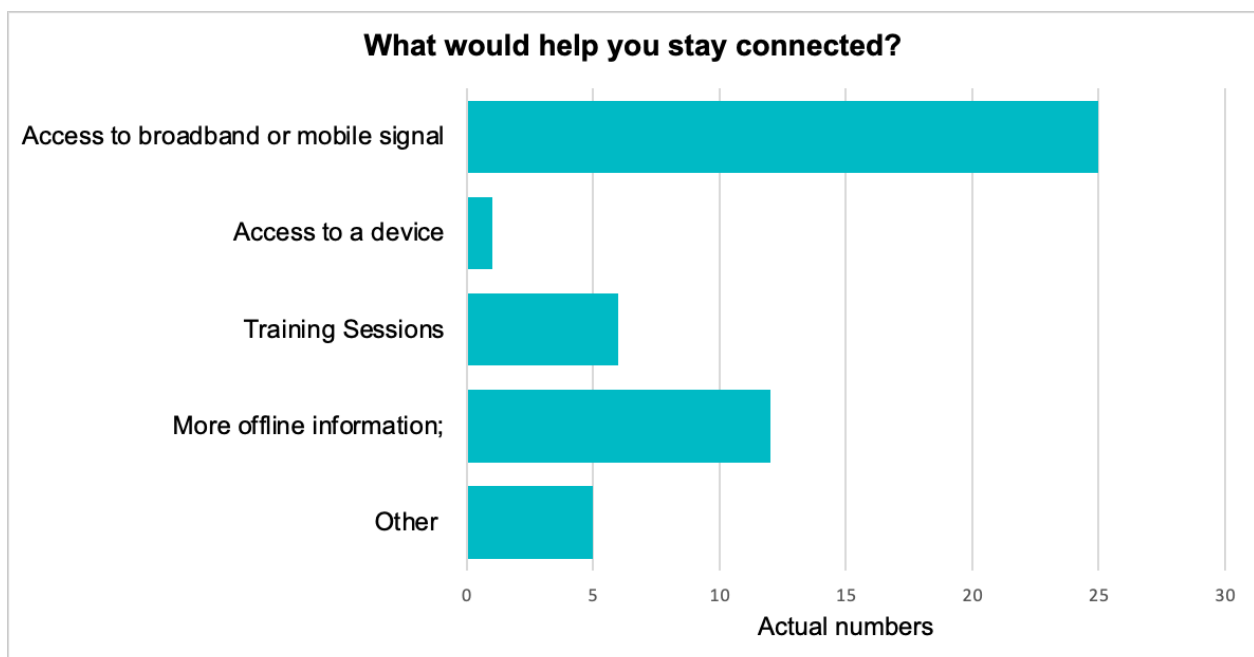


8 of 10 respondents told us they would like to use one or more of the above platforms.

21 of 67 stated that they feel they miss out on information by not having access to these platforms. Of these 41 told us what might help them stay connected.

*\*Note - A list of possible options was given*

Only 89 of 140 respondents stated they use online meeting platforms. This seems low given how many meetings, classes and events switched to such platforms during lockdown. But only 6 people said they would like to use such platform.



## **Action 6.2 Staying Connected**

**6.2.1** Refer to newsletter action

**6.2.2** WTC to ensure that own publicity is not restricted to online and hard copy is posted across the Parish

**6.2.3** WTC to investigate more presence on social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram

**6.2.4** WTC to publicise any social media or general computer training on offer locally

**6.2.5** WTC to publicise any online communication training on offer locally

### **Additional Comments**

In the main additional comments fell into three main categories:

1. Need for hard copy and face to face - 5 comments

*“my elderly mother who lives in Wivey has been VERY adversely affected with less 'hard copy' during and post-pandemic, eg lack of The Messenger and church notice sheets”*

2. Poor mobile signal - 3 comments

*“A better mobile signal (4/5g) is greatly needed.”*

3. Poor broadband - 3 comments

*“Access to fibre broadband is ridiculously inconsistent. Homes next to each other have different connectivity. There is a BT fibre optic cable from Langley to Clatworthy that could easily be used to provide FTTP to homes along that route (according to the BT engineers who installed it) but BT have no intention to actually offer that. The only way to get full fibre is to pay a 3rd party company over £10k to install it.”*

**A full list of comments is in Appendix 6 - Connectivity**